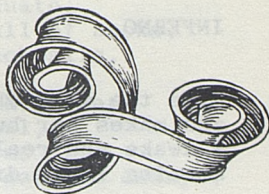




THE WORMWOOD REVIEW

V.25 No.3; Issue 99

US-ISSN:0043-9401



THE RIVAL POET

The column of your book titles,
that always introduces your latest,
unsettles me.

It is longer than the name
of an Italian countess, longer
than this poem will probably be.

My own production, thimble of words,
could be etched on the head of a pin
and there would still be room for
The Lord's Prayer, the Magna Carta, etc.

And it's not just the amount.
I read you like a catechism
and afterward the typewriter
under my fingers feels like a complicated stone.

No matter.
In my revenge daydream, I am the one
poised high on the marble stairs
above the glittering ballroom.

The butler announces me
and the Countess Maria Teresa
Isabella Veronica Multalira
Eleganza de Bella Ferrari.

You are the one fidgeting below
with some local Cathy
hanging all over you.